

# Planning and Zoning Board

## *Study Session Minutes*

Mesa City Council Chambers – Lower Level, 57 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street

Date: September 22, 2021 Time: 3:00 p.m.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chair Jessica Sarkissian  
Vice Chair Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo  
\*Jeffrey Crockett  
Ben Ayers

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Tim Boyle  
Shelly Allen  
Troy Peterson

(\*Boardmembers and staff participated in the meeting through the use of telephonic and audio conference equipment)

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Nana Appiah  
Michelle Dahlke  
Rachel Prelog  
Lesley Davis  
Cassidy Welch  
Jennifer Gniffke  
Kellie Rorex  
Charlotte McDermott  
Sarah Staudinger  
Rebecca Gorton

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

None

1. Call meeting to order.

Chair Sarkissian declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

2. Review items on the agenda for the September 22, 2021, regular Planning and Zoning Board Hearing.

Staffmember Kellie Rorex notified the Board that case ZON21-00589 will be continued to the October 13<sup>th</sup> hearing.

Staffmember Kellie Rorex presented case ZON21-00657 to the Board. She stated that the site is located east of Ellsworth Road on the north side of Ray Road within the Eastmark Community. She explained that the General Plan Character area designation is Mixed Use Community with the goal of providing a mixture of uses for the creation of a live, work, and play community and that the site is within Development Unit ¾ North of the Eastmark Community, and the Land Use Group is identified as General Urban.

Ms. Rorex explained that the request is for Site Plan Review to allow for a multiple residence development. She stated that the site is currently vacant and has no access roads to the site

yet. She further stated that there are 24 buildings proposed on site which includes five different building types with 258 residential units. Some of the amenities being proposed with the project include a pool, dog park and a putting green. Ms. Rorex stated that the applicant completed the Citizen Participation process and mailed letters to property owners within 500 feet of the site, HOA's and registered neighborhoods and that neither staff nor the applicant had received any feedback from neighbors. Ms. Rorex presented the elevations of the clubhouse and one of the proposed building types and explained that the Eastmark Design Review Committee will approve the final elevations for the site.

Ms. Rorex explained that overall, the proposal complies with the 2040 Mesa General Plan, the Eastmark Community Plan and the Development Unit Plan for DU ¾ North and that is also meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 6.1 of the Eastmark Community Plan. She stated that staff recommends approval with conditions.

There were no questions or discussion by the Board.

Staffmember Cassidy Welch presented case ZON20-00840 to the Board. Ms. Welch stated the site is located west of Stapley Road on the south side of McKellips Road between two canals. The General Plan Designation for the property is Neighborhood Suburban. The site is adjacent to the two canals and there is a significant grade on the property.

Ms. Welch explained that the request is a Rezone from Single Residence 9 (RS-9) and Multiple Residence 4 (RM-4) to Multiple Residence 2 (RM-2) with a Planned Area Development Overlay (PAD); and Site Plan Review to allow for a multiple residence development.

Ms. Welch explained that the proposal is for 30 multiple residence units in four buildings which range from 2 to 3 stories. She explains that as shown on the site plan, the development is centralized around a central drive, with the parking garages located on either side of that central drive and parking at the rear of the property. The site includes several outdoor amenities which include a pedestrian path that circulates the entirety of the property and leads to the adjacent canals, as well as a fitness and office center, a pool and some outdoor barbecue and picnic areas.

Ms. Welch stated that as part of the PAD Overlay, there are several deviations that are being requested. Those deviations include a reduction to the minimum building separation from 35' to 30' to accommodate the uneven on-site grading and to support a unique building design. The next deviation is an increase to the maximum garage doors adjacent to each other from 3 to 4 doors which also supports the unique building design, and that garages will also be recessed below the balconies and include landscaping between the doors. The final deviation is for the landscape setback on the east side to allow three parking spaces to encroach into the landscape setback on the east side of the property. Ms. Welch explained that traditionally, per the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, those landscape setbacks shall remain free of any encroachment, including vehicular parking. This deviation is also due to the unique shape of the lot and to allow increased landscaping in other areas. The site plan consists of 30 multi-residential units in 4 buildings with buildings ranging from 2 to 3 stories. Ms. Welch stated that the applicant attended the Design Review Board meeting on September 14, where minor changes were recommended.

Ms. Welch stated that the applicant conducted a Citizen Participation process which included mailing notification letters to the surrounding residents and held two virtual neighborhood meetings in October 2020 and April 2021. The concerns that were brought by residents were the potential for increased traffic on McKellips Road and visibility and privacy concerns due to the height of the proposed development. She explained that the Transportation Department reviewed this proposed request and found that McKellips Road had adequate capacity to accommodate the proposed development. Ms. Welch said that with regards to the visibility and privacy concerns, as a part of the development the applicant is not proposing a height increase and they are within the maximum 40 feet that is permitted. They are also proposing sufficient landscaping in addition to the landscaping that already exists within those canals to buffer the neighborhood to the west.

Ms. Welch stated that staff finds the proposed development meets the criteria for a PAD overlay outlined in Chapter 22; the criteria for Site Plan Review in Chapter 69 and complies with the intent of the 2040 Mesa General Plan. Staff recommends approval with conditions.

Boardmember Crockett asked if the Transportation Department looked at the access in and out of the development off McKellips Road. He said that the entrance and exit to the subdivision is going to be on the slope of the hill as one comes down off the Mesa Drive, he wonders if there are any safety issues with that type of a driveway located in that position. Specifically, if the Transportation Department has looked at this issue.

Ms. Welch responded that the Transportation Department did look at that issue and in fact, they requested a specific site visibility study from the applicant, which the applicant did provide and indicated that there would be sufficient visibility as one comes across that that slope change.

Chair Sarkissian stated she is glad Mr. Crockett brought up the comment about the traffic and explained that her concern is that as they are going through the process of making sure the trees are not in the visibility area as traffic is going up the hill, that maybe they need to push back the foliage a little further for safety issues.

Staffmember Jennifer Gniffke presented case ZON21-00449 to the Board. She stated that the project is located along the east side of Power Road about one quarter mile south of Ray Road. Ms. Gniffke explained that the General Plan Land Use Designation is Mixed Use Activity District, which promotes strong viable centers of commercial activity, unique shopping and entertainment and stated that there is an existing unoccupied home at the back of the site. Ms. Gniffke said the request is for a Site Plan Review for the purpose to allow for a new restaurant with a double drive-thru. She explained that the Zoning District is Limited Commercial and Light Industrial and a restaurant with a drive-thru is a permitted use in these zoning districts. She stated that the site plan shows the almost 4,000 square foot restaurant with a double drive-thru located in the western third of the property, and the east side of the lot is reserved for open space and retention.

Ms. Gniffke stated that the Design Review Board discussed the request at their September 14 work session and had a number of comments including recommendation to wrap the full length glazing around the northwest corner of the building and that the canopies on the north elevation do not integrate well with the architecture. The Design Review Board suggested varied brick sizes and more contrast and colors in the bricks. They also suggested a pedestrian path to be stamped concrete or another material different from the drive surface.

Ms. Gniffke explained that staff is working with the applicant on modifying the site plan as well as the elevations to address those comments.

Ms. Gniffke said that the applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process and notified surrounding property owners within 500 feet. There are no HOA's or registered neighborhoods in the area. She explained that staff has been contacted by one neighbor, but they were just requesting information about getting utilities to their property and not associated with this proposal. In summary, Ms. Gniffke stated that the request complies with the Mesa 2040 General Plan as well as with the Criteria in Chapter 69 for a Site Plan Review and that the staff recommendation is for approval with conditions.

There were no questions or discussion by the Board.

Staffmember Cassidy Welch presented case ZON21-00543 to the Board. She explained that the subject site is located south of the Warner Road Alignment and west of the Sossaman Road Alignment north of the Loop 202 freeway. Ms. Welch explained that the General Plan Designation for the property is Mixed Use Activity and Employment and that the intent behind the Mixed Use Activity District and Employment Character Areas is to provide for large scale activity areas and a wide range of high quality employment. She explained that when compared to the surrounding developing pattern for this area, the project is consistent with the Employment character Area Designation.

Ms. Welch explained that the request is for a Rezone from Light Industrial and Agricultural to Light Industrial with a PAD Overlay and Site Plan Review to allow for an industrial park. She explained that the intent of the Light Industrial Zoning District is to provide areas that serve the surrounding trade area and such industrial uses as warehousing and offices are permitted.

Ms. Welch stated that the request includes a PAD Overlay and that the deviations requested as a part of the PAD overlay include an increase of the maximum building height from 40 feet to 50 feet and that the intent behind that deviation is to accommodate planned industrial operations. She explained that the next request is a modification to the industrial parking ratio to one space per 900 square feet and that that one space for 900 square feet parking ratio is consistent with warehousing, which is anticipated to be the primary use on the proposed industrial park and that the parking ratio is consistent with other industrial parks within the City of Mesa. Ms. Welch stated that the applicant has also requested a reduction to the number of required bicycle parking from one space per 10 vehicle spaces, and one space per 20 vehicle spaces after the first 50 spaces to just 10 bicycle parking spaces per building and that the reason behind this reduction is that it is not anticipated that there will be a lot of bicycles being used at this development due to the proximity to the freeway.

Ms. Welch stated that the site plan consists of nine large scale industrial buildings, ranging from approximately 80,000 square feet to 494,000 square feet and that most of the buildings have some sort of loading dock which are oriented internal to the site, away from the street.

Ms. Welch explained that the development went to the Design Review Board on September 14, and the Board had no major concerns with the proposed design. She stated that the applicant conducted a Citizen Participation process which included the required notification letters and that they also held a neighborhood meeting in which nobody attended. She further stated that neither staff nor the applicant has received any comments.

In summary, Ms. Welch said that staff finds that the proposed development meets the 2040 Mesa General Plan, the intent of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan, the criteria in Chapter 22 for a PAD Overlay, and the criteria in Chapter 69 for Site Plan Review and that staff is recommending approval with conditions.

There were no questions or discussion by the Board.

Staffmember Cassidy Welch presented case ZON21-00408, a Preliminary Plat for Project Tailwinds to the Board. She stated that this is for a site located on the south side of Pecos Road, east of Sossaman Road on the east side of 80th Street. Ms. Welch explained that the General Plan Designation for the property is Employment and that the request is for a Preliminary Plat to allow for an industrial park. She said that the applicant opted into the Pecos Road Economic Opportunity Zone for the development of 10 industrial buildings. Ms. Welch clarified that the purpose of the preliminary plat is to accommodate a Condominium Plat for those 10 buildings to be under individual ownership.

Ms. Welch stated that in summary, staff finds that the proposed Preliminary Plat meets the criteria outlined in the 2040 Mesa General Plan, meets the intent of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan and meets the Subdivision regulations and that is recommending approval with conditions.

There were no questions or discussion by the Board.

Boardmember Crockett asked if he could have a follow up with a question on item \*4-a which was discussed earlier. He asked if the visibility study was included in the case packet and Ms. Welch responded that the study was not included in the case packet and that it was included as a part of the application submittal and was reviewed by the Transportation Department. Mr. Crockett replied he was having a little bit of discomfort about that issue of safety along the Road and asked to see the report, if possible, to have that distributed to the Boardmembers. Boardmember Crockett said it was not necessarily to hold up voting on the request at the meeting but at least pull it off consent if possible. He stated that he drives McKellips Road quite a bit and has some concerns about how the traffic is going to work and would feel better if he saw that visibility study and asked if it would be possible to provide that to the Board prior to the hearing.

Planning Director Nana Appiah stated staff should be able to pull that item from the consent agenda and send it before the hearing. He explained that it that is not enough time to review the study, it could be included as a condition of approval. Dr. Appiah stated that staff can include the condition before it goes to City Council to include this issue be addressed by the Transportation Department before City Council considers the project.

Boardmember Crockett replied that would be fine and asked if this was a concern for the other boardmembers. Mr. Crockett said that knowing that area like he does, he has a concern about people driving west coming down off Mesa Drive with traffic exiting from that subdivision and stated that he wanted to make sure that there is not a safety issue that the Board needs to be thinking about.

Chair Sarkissian agreed it would be good to just see if the Board can get a copy of the study to look over really quick and asked if this portion of McKellips Road is a divided highway in this

area. Staff confirmed there was not a divided street.

3. Planning Director's Update:

- Decisions of the City Council's September 13 and September 20, 2021 land use hearings.

Dr. Appiah stated there have not been any major land use decisions made by the City Council and explained that there will be one item introduced to the City Council on Monday that is the multi-family project on Adobe and Recker Road that was recommended for approval to City Council by the Board for 38 units.

4. Adjournment.

Vice Chair Villanueva-Saucedo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:24 pm. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Ayers.

Vote: 4-0 Approved (Boardmember Boyle, Allen and Peterson, absent)

Upon tabulation of vote, it showed:

AYES – Sarkissian, Villanueva-Saucedo, Crockett and Ayers

NAYS – None

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nana K. Appiah, AICP, Secretary  
Planning Director

**Note: Audio recordings of the Planning & Zoning Board study sessions are available in the Planning Division Office for review. The regular Planning & Zoning Board meeting is "live bRoadcasted" through the City of Mesa's website at [www.Mesaaz.gov](http://www.Mesaaz.gov).**